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The substitution of the word "reparation" for "indemnity" in the title of one of the Conference's most important committees, ere it had been many days old, has, as yet, not received the comment its significance deserves; but it is quite plain that the evidence available, gathered by expert economists, social investigators, and statisticians, is leading the Conference to an attitude toward the defeated Powers, and especially Germany, which, while it may not please the "bitter-enders," will be justified at the bar of history just as it now commends itself to practical statesmen. They realize that a Germany impoverished cannot become a Germany able to make good legitimate claims for reparation to Belgium, France, and Serbia. Solely on grounds of self-interest the Allies must curb their demands for anything like an immediate indemnity equalling losses incurred.

Likewise, it is apparent that the Conference understands that if there is to be a fair and equitable apportioning of the financial burdens of the war's costs, there must be something like an international standardizing of credits and loans, of use of means of transportation and communication, of wages for workers, of child labor, and of administration of all the details of government on its economic and social sides. Hence the creation of committees and special commissions of investigation such as no similar conference of diplomats and statesmen ever had aiding it. Quite obviously, facts like these, with their implication as to coming action, all point to a broadening of the basis on which the Society of Nations is to rest and a rooting of it in the ordinary life of the working, trading, manufacturing world such as it never could get were it solely a political device with conventional governmental functions. Capital and labor are to have a vital interest in it as well as the political servants of the peoples and students of international law. It is upon these phases of the problem that Mr. Tead has written suggestively in his article on page 41.

In very truth, it is to be a "Society of Nations," socialized under compulsion of the world's pecuniary and commissariat necessities, and a time when the whole structure of European and American society is impeached by the emergence of a popular uprising that challenges democracy itself by a call to the banners of the proletariat. The highest, deepest, most far-visioned political strategy has demanded a democratization of diplomacy, statecraft, industry and racial relations if the world is to be saved from a class war which threatens to make no distinctions between autocracies, constitutional monarchies and republics, and that hopes by revolutionary rather than by evolutionary methods to turn ideals into realities. Fortunately the Commissioners seem to know this, and are acting accordingly. They are meeting a great need by a great endeavor.

AUTHORS, WAR, AND PEACE

THE birthday anniversary of James Russell Lowell coincides with that of George Washington, who, by the way, had his portrait well limned by Lowell in "Under the Old Elm" and in poetic colors that flame and burn on the canvas of discriminating character analysis. It is in this poem that the Cambridge poet, patriot and critic wrote those lines that are the best American variant of Wordsworth's immortal ode on "Duty." Said Lowell, having Washington in mind:

The longer on this earth we live
And weigh the various qualities of men,
Seeing how most are fugitive,
Or fitful gifts, at best, of now and then,
Wind-wavered corpse-lights, daughters
of the fen,
The more we feel the high stern-featured
beauty
Of plain devotedness to duty,
Steadfast and still, nor paid with mortal
praise,
But finding amplest recompense
For life's ungarlanded expense
In work done squarely and unwasted
days.

On this poet's birthday anniversary, under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, in the city of New York, there will be the consummation of a conference between American and British men of letters, the latter it is hoped to be represented by some of the greatest of contemporary poets, critics, and historians. To express gratification that such a form of Anglo-American rapprochement has been planned is so obvious a privilege and duty that it hardly needs more than the noting of the fact. After a succession of visits from British commissions of military and naval men, captains of industry, clergymen of eminence, educators and journalists, it was high time that the makers of literature should be welcomed to the United States and brought in touch with our own authors, as well as given an opportunity to see the republic resolutely adjusting itself to tasks of reconstruction.

Whether any of the visitors are of the dimension of the great Victorians, whether British war literature has been of a major type, producing anything comparable with the war books of France, Belgium, Italy, and Russia—these are not queries with point. The essential fact is that common inheritors of the great verse of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton and Tennyson, and the majestic prose of the makers of the King James' Version of the Bible, and of Burke, Ruskin, Newman, and Huxley, are to have a chance to fraternize. They can conspire how they may together champion humanism in a day and generation that having at frightful cost put militarism under its feet, is now tempted to exalt utilitarianism. They can agree to tune their songs and

key their novels, dramas, and orations to the harmonies of democracy and social reconstruction which the rampant, freedom-coveting, idol-breaking, constitution-salvaging masses of the world are now sounding forth in tones that bring terror to entrenched privilege, whether dynastic, political, or social and economic.

That authors can be patriots in all the variant conceptions of that word the war has disclosed. A terrible toll of genius and talent has been taken on the battlefields of France, Flanders, Italy, and Turkey. Others of the writing guild have done gruelling service with the pen (and not the bayonet) as a weapon, by using their art of expression to voice for governments, for voluntary relief and philanthropic agencies, and for the various arms of the military service, those facts as to their functioning and those ideals back of their motives for daily duty, which have won from the rank and file of the people volunteers, cash, and loyalty to the common cause. Never in history has there been finer pamphleteering and publicity work for humanity than French, British, and American authors of highest rank have carried on during the war; and of the finer forms of it in its higher and more enduring reaches of aim and achievement the public is still comparatively unaware, since it has been written and accumulated with futurity in mind, and for use by the historian and social philosopher.

With the fighting ended, as all the world hopes, and with the colossal tasks of reconstruction or re-ordination of civilization awaiting statesmen, economists, and prophets with a social vision, the task of the author as a civic servant by no means ceases. The same art which he has shown he masters in picturing the fighting, he now must consecrate to make alluring the stern duty of rehabilitating Europe, re-educating the maimed or blinded warriors, adjusting taxation so that its incidence falls on the strong—not the weak—and devising a workable state for a law-governed world. Post-war literature, British or American, will fall far short of its opportunity if it fails to be inspiring as well as informing, beautiful as well as serviceable, and distinguished in form as well as popular in content.

ART AND WAR MEMORIALS

THE American Academy of Arts and Letters wisely has appealed to the American people to conserve beauty as well as do a civic duty in such choice of war-memorials as they may decide upon. Fortunately in the national capital a Commission of Fine Arts exists with advisory power. For some years past Congress and the President have heeded its counsels. Doubtless they

will continue to, and thus the District of Columbia will be protected from the ambition of the mediocre artist and the gullibility of well-meaning but indiscriminating patrons, whether individuals or patriotic societies.

There are a few of the States and more of the cities of the Union with similar advisory commissions, which already have established precedents that may be counted upon to help carry out the policy prescribed by the American Academy of Fine Arts. But taking the country by and large there will be no such expert guidance. Whatever is done in the way of protection of communities from a multiplicity of such "atrocities" as followed the Civil War of 1861-65 will be done by town and city officials or by citizens "of light and leading" who must insist that all designs for monuments be submitted to experts or persons with taste,—and erected only after conferences with authorities in the realm of art. Where this is done there will follow a decided rise in community standards of beauty. The sculptor will take his rightful place above the stone-cutter. Symbolism can then assert itself above crass realism. A perpetual reminder of physical strife also can become an aesthetic missionary of the gospel of moral achievement in behalf of a righteous cause. Last, but not least, out of the joy of victory won and out of the generosity of spirit which such joy will foster, there can come substantial pecuniary aid to a group of persons—artists—for whom war, while it is being fought, means much graver loss of income and anguish of spirit than it is the lot of the ordinary civilian to undergo.

Fortunately for the United States this period of post-bellum activity in designing, placing and erecting war memorials will find the nation far richer in men and women able to design adequate memorials than it was in the '70's and '80's. They have the requisite technical skill, discriminating understanding of their fine opportunity and a passionate hope that their countrymen will use them for lofty ends as chroniclers in their own way of the heroisms and nobilities disclosed in the last war. It will be a bitter and grievous wrong done to artists of the country if, through ignorance or contempt or stupidity or parochial politics or parsimony, they are not set busy for the next decade in this field of post-war, civilian toil and achievement.

Precisely the form that these artists' imaginative and creative labor should take may be left with some measure of safety to the persons, societies or communities that employ them. There is this to be noted, however, in connection with the present temper and mood of the popular mind. Roman and French "arches of triumph," realistic portrayals of the sanguinary aspects of war and "faithful" portrait busts and statues of participants in battles on land or sea or in mid-air are not going to